



LEWELLEN, 31.8 m. (419 pop.), is in a section that produces alfalfa, sugar beets, and corn.

Left from Lewellen on a country road that crosses the North Platte River to ASH HOLLOW, 3 m., a deep canyon where one route of the Oregon Trail, used chiefly after Fort Sedgwick (see SECTION 4) had been established on the South Platte, descended steeply from a plateau to the North Platte. The canyon was so named by Frémont because of "a few scattering ash trees in the dry ravine." The precipitous but now easily passable road through the canyon, bordered by rank, spring-fed vegetation and arching trees, contrasts strikingly with the sweeping yellow wheat fields on the plateau and the sandy banks of the river below. On a knoll close to the river is the SITE OF FORT GRATAN, a post that was built of sod.

Near the mouth of the hollow is a moist spot where in season wild roses, chokecherries, gooseberries, currants, and ferns cover the ground beneath the tall ash trees. Seven-tenths of a mile from the river are a few small cedars, said to mark the site of a cabin built by trappers in 1846. This cabin was later a general meeting place and unofficial post office. Nearby are a small grove of ash trees and a spring.

Half a mile below the edge of the plateau are the RUINS OF THE JOE CLARY HOUSE; Clary was the first settler here. About midway the road follows ruts of the old trail for a short distance.

At WINDLASS HILL, indicated by a marker, the drivers of covered wagons experienced much difficulty. Early accounts often mention the casualties to men, beasts, and equipment that were common events here. An English traveler who made the trip in 1849 wrote that the descent was so breath-taking that no one spoke for two miles. He reported that riders dismounted to lead their horses, that wagons with wheels locked were steadied with ropes, and that two mules were crushed under a wagon that broke loose. In the 1860's Indians sometimes waited in ambush above the narrow passage.

Ash Hollow and neighboring ravines were popular Indian hunting grounds. It was the scene of a day-long battle between the Pawnee and the Sioux, in which the Pawnee were badly beaten and driven from the North Platte Valley.

By the time the Pioneer Saints reached this point the "roadometer" was operating successfully, but William Clayton was much annoyed to find that Harmon was having it "understood that he invented the machinery . . . which makes me think less of him than I formerly did. . . . What little souls work."

At 33.7 m. the highway crosses BLUE WATER CREEK, in 1855 the scene of the Battle of Blue Water, also called the Battle of Ash Hollow. Several incidents led up to the battle, notably the killing of Lt. John Lawrence Grattan and his force of 28 men by Sioux (see below). Gen. W. S. Harney with more than a thousand men entered the Platte country to subjugate the restless Indians. Most of the Sioux, when ordered to cross to the south side of the Platte River, did so, but one band of Brûlé stayed on the north side of the river. It was here at Blue Water Creek that Harney and his men overtook and attacked them.

OSHKOSH, 43.7 m. (843 pop.), is the seat of Garden County. In 1885 Henry G. Gumaer, Alfred W. Gumaer, Herbert W. Potter, and John Robinson of St. Paul, Neb., established a cattle ranch here. When

Russell, Charles M.

The artist Charles Marion Russell, b. St. Louis, Mo., Mar. 19, 1864, d. Oct. 24, 1926, dealt exclusively with a single subject: the American West. At the age of 15 he set out for Montana, where he worked as a herder, hunter, trapper, and cowboy while developing as an artist. At the age of 29 he began painting seriously, devoting himself to scenes of range and mountain life. His vivid, dramatic, and sometimes humorous illustrations of cowboys, Indians, and animals, such as *Lost in a Snowstorm—We Are Friends* (1888; Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Tex.), are spirited and truthful records of the Wild West.

David Tatham

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*Frederick Remington*

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**Remington, Frederic**

An American artist who recorded the rapidly disappearing Wild West, Frederic Sackrider Remington, b. Canton, N.Y., Oct. 1 or 4, 1861, d. Dec. 26, 1909, first made his reputation as an illustrator and painter. In 1881 he began wandering around the western United States, working for a time as a cowboy. After studying (1886) painting at the Art Student's League in New York with J. Alden Weir, Remington continued to visit the West, where he followed the campaigns of the U.S. cavalry. His first commission for Harper's Weekly illustrated an incident that occurred in the last great Indian war led by Geronimo.

By 1891, Remington settled in New Rochelle, N.Y., where he filled his studio with the western material that provided the specific details upon which he based his paintings. No matter how exciting the scenes, his literal definition of the blue-jacketed pony soldiers and Indians and the naturalistic relation of form and space save his work from the sensationalism common to contemporary dime novels.

Watching the sculptor Frederic Ruckstull at work during the summer of 1895 inspired Remington to model his cowboys, Indians, and troopers in clay. Although his bronze *Bronco Buster* (1895; one version in New-York Historical Society, New York City) contains all the details characteristic of his paintings, the form is sculptural in conception. The three-dimensional medium helped Remington heighten the vitality of the rearing horse.

During the Spanish-American War, Remington worked as an artist and correspondent in Cuba, supplying illustrations for periodicals. The Old West, however, remained his favorite subject. *Comin' through the Rye* (1902; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City) presents four uproarious cowboys riding out on ponies whose hooves barely touch the ground. The group rejects such traditional sculptural principles as the expression of weight and support.

Remington's 2,700 paintings and drawings, his sculptures, and his many magazine articles helped create the myths surrounding the American cowboy and the far-western frontier.

**Joan Siegfried**

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## The Bronco Buster (Picture)



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Frederic Remington (1861-1909) documented life in the American West through paintings and sculpture. His sculpture The Bronco Buster (1895) is perhaps the most famous of American Western art bronzes. (Art Resource, NY)